

THE MD CONNECTION

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF TABER

Administration Office 4900B - 50th St Taber, AB T1G 1T2
Ph 403 223 3541 www.mdtaber.ab.ca



COUNCIL MEMBERS

MERRILL HARRIS (Reeve)

Division 1 403-634-0462

JOHN TURCATO

Division 2 403-634-1591

BRIAN HILDEBRAND

Division 3 403-647-7556

TAMARA MIYANAGA

(Deputy Reeve)

Division 4 403-308-6538

JOHN DEGROOT

Division 5 403-654-8700

MURRAY REYNOLDS

Division 6 403-635-8449

CHANTAL CLAASSEN

Division 7 403-593-9693



REEVE'S REFLECTIONS

MERRILL HARRIS, REEVE

After the beautiful summer and fall harvest, I for one was not very enthused to see the abrupt change in weather, yet despite the return of snow and frigid temperatures, I'm proud to announce that Council and Administration have been working on a lot of exciting projects around the MD of Taber.

Phase 1 construction of the Horsefly Emergency Regional Spillway Project was open to tender in late September and closed on October 13th. We received six sealed construction bids, and on November 7th Council awarded the project to the lowest bid from DeGraaf Excavating Ltd, whose tender was \$24.8M after some adjustments. The MD of Taber has received a total of \$39M from provincial and federal grant programs. Contributions include \$20.4M from the Alberta Community Resiliency Grant (Government of Alberta), \$18.6M from Investment Canada Infrastructure Program Grant (Government of Canada), and \$8M from our Municipal partners (County of Lethbridge, County of 40 Mile, Cypress County, Town of Taber, Town of Bow Island, Town of Coaldale and Village

of Barnwell). On November 22nd, we received approval for the Water Act from Alberta Environment and Protected Areas allowing construction to begin. Engineering for Phases 2 and 3 are ongoing with the goal of tendering out construction services next summer/fall.

On November 2nd, the official launch of the RenuWell Project was finally realized. A ribbon-cutting ceremony, followed by a luncheon, was scheduled at one of the sites, but blizzard-like conditions cancelled the ribbon-cutting portion. In attendance were the following project partners: Keith Hirsche of RenuWell Energy Solutions, Iron and Earth, Municipal Climate Change Action Centre (MCCAC), Ron Huvenaars and Daryl Bennett of Action Surface Rights Association, Irrigation Canal Power Co-operative Ltd (IRRICAN / SMRID), Canadian Solar Inc, SkyFire Energy, Medicine Hat College, SouthGrow Regional Initiative, and Councillors and staff of the MD of Taber. Also in attendance was Elder Charlie Fox from the Kainai First Nations, who gave his blessing for the project, along with representatives from Eagle Spirit Nest Community

Continued inside...

Association. This project has taken two abandoned oil and gas wells and converted them to small-scale solar sites capable of producing 1MW of electricity. Council has adopted the position of never placing solar operations on highly productive agricultural lands – lands that would be permanently removed from food production. Using these small-scale projects on abandoned oil and gas brownfield sites (lands already removed from production) is more appropriate. If we converted half the abandoned and unreclaimed sites in the MD, it would be equivalent to the massive 3300-acre project in a neighbouring municipality.

The Land-Use Bylaw rewrite project has started. Our Economic Development and Planning team have taken the lead on this project with the expertise and assistance of Bonnie Bruner from the Oldman River Regional Services Commission. The 20-year-old document has seen amendments as the need has arisen. This project will take close to two years from start to finish, and the general public will be able to provide input and consultation along the way. Once we have something to present publicly, we will host several open houses to provide opportunities for the public to comment.

A quick reminder that the property tax deadline is changing for 2023. The new deadline for tax collection will be on September 30th, 2023, with late penalties coming into effect on October 1st, 2023.

Other significant projects underway include the new Enchant residential subdivision with 36 new lots in development, and a new residential subdivision in Grassy Lake with 46 new lots in development as Phase 1. Municipal roads and roadways are always a priority, with work underway or nearing completion. We have applied for grant funding from Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors to replace numerous bridge structures throughout the MD – another important concern.

The recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Taber Police Service has given our Regional Enforcement Services a new look and presence within our municipal borders. They are tasked with the delivery of bylaw enforcement, provincial statutes and public safety related matters including school zone safety, speeding, dogs at large, overweight loads, etc.

This year I encourage our residents to spread a little Christmas cheer. If able, donating to your local food bank or other choice of charitable organization goes a long way for those less fortunate.

On behalf of Council, Administration and staff, we wish you all the best with family and friends this Christmas Season.

- › **Range Rd 18-1 & Township Rd 15-2**
Located near Enchant, this project was awarded to White Fox Group and construction is currently on hold till spring 2023. This project involves the complete reconstruction of 6.5 km of roadway.
- › **Taber Municipal Park Irrigation Supply Upgrade**
Completed by Tollestrup Construction Inc. This project was completed on budget, just in time for the 2022 camping season and is currently in the 1-year warranty period.
- › **Enchant Subdivision Expansion**
This project was awarded to East Butte Contracting, construction is currently on hold till spring 2023. With this, Enchant will see an additional 35 residential lots for sale.
- › **Grassy Lake Landfill Reclamation**
A 100m setback waiver application has

been granted by Alberta Environment and Protected Areas. This waiver would allow the MD of Taber to leave the existing inert landfill material in place and build the subdivision safely around the landfill location outside the recommended waiver distance.

- › **Grassy Lake North Subdivision**
Phase 1 of the Grassy Lake North Subdivision is currently in the design stages, this project will see an additional 40+ residential lots available for purchase in the near future.
- › **2023 Shoulder Pull Program**
Road review and assessments are currently taking place. Following the reviews, a plan for the 2023 season will be put in place.
- › **Highway 3 Potable Water Study**
A draft report has been submitted by MPE. Reviews are underway with a final report due early 2023.

HORSEFLY EMERGENCY SPILLWAY UPDATE: *Phase 1 Underway*

Construction on Phase 1 of the Horsefly Emergency Regional Spillway Project is finally underway northeast of Taber. The tender was advertised in late September with a closing date of October 13th and was awarded during a Special Meeting of Council held on November 7th, 2022.

Of the six proposals received, Council awarded the project to DeGraaf Excavating Ltd for the lowest tendered price of \$25,345,180 plus GST, on behalf of the South Regional Stormwater Drainage Committee (SRSDC).

Since then, the technical committee met with the excavating firm for the discussion of finding any potential cost savings in their tendered price. As a result, \$458,000 will be trimmed from their original bid by way of a change order.

The Water Act Approval was received from Alberta Environment and Protected Areas on November 22nd, 2022. The project is now underway as DeGraaf Excavating Ltd moved the first shovelfuls of dirt onsite.

MPE Engineering Ltd and Stantec Consulting will be supervising the daily construction activities as the engineering consultants for the project.

As a condition of the tendered agreement, the project contractor has been made aware that any of the work to be performed cannot negatively interfere with any farming operations during the regular farming season.

The Horsefly Regional Emergency Spillway Project consists of 3 Phases:

- › Phase 1 - from Taber Lake to the Oldman River
- › Phase 2 - from Horsefly Reservoir to Taber Lake
- › Phase 3 - from the main SMRID Canal south of Taber to the Horsefly Reservoir

A groundbreaking ceremony for Phase 1 is anticipated to take place in 2023 (official date to be determined) with full completion scheduled for no later than June 2024.

This project is ongoing, and updates on progress will be provided regularly.

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada.

This project is also funded in part by the Government of Alberta.

DID YOU KNOW?

RENUWELL RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY

1

The MD of Taber is looking to review its Land-Use Bylaw.

Meaningful public engagement is important. If you want to be involved please stay tuned for more details — date and time to be determined.

2

Utility rates for the MD of Taber will receive a 5% increase effective January 1, 2023.

- › Monthly Water Rates will increase from \$63.50 to \$67.00
- › Overage Rates will increase from \$2.34 to \$2.47 per m³ on consumption over 15.0 m³
- › Bulk Water Rates will increase from \$2.52 to \$2.65 per m³
- › Monthly Sewer Rates will increase from \$21.30 to \$22.40
- › Monthly Waste Collection Rate for Grassy Lake is \$11.00 /per cart

mdtaber.ab.ca/p/utility-rates

3

A 12% penalty will be applied to any remaining unpaid property taxes on February 1, 2023.

Information on how you can make payments to your property taxes is available at:

mdtaber.ab.ca/p/property-taxes

4

Our offices will be closed for the holidays on the following dates.

December 26th and 27th, and on January 2nd. Wishing you and yours a safe, healthy, and prosperous New Year!



The official launch of the long-awaited RenuWell Project took place during a luncheon at the Taber Heritage Inn on Wednesday, November 2, 2022.

This first-of-its-kind project re-purposes abandoned oil and gas leases for community solar development.

Despite the many hurdles, the nearly operational solar projects are now fully installed on two abandoned oil and gas sites in the MD of Taber.

In attendance were the following partners of this innovative project:

- › **Keith Hirsche (RenuWell Energy Solutions)** – project architect and innovator
- › **Municipal Climate Change Action Centre / Alberta Innovates** – who provided grant funding
- › **IRRICAN / SMRID** – a financial contributor and the ultimate owner of the project
- › **SkyFire Energy** – who provided in-kind technical support to the project
- › **Medicine Hat College** – who delivered the educational training for the installation and maintenance of the project
- › **Iron and Earth** – a non-profit organisation assisting oil and gas workers transition into new industries such as renewable energy
- › **Daryl Bennett (Action Surface Rights Association)** – who brought the landowner perspective to the project
- › **Cooperating landowners (Molnar and Layton) families** – who hosted these projects on their lands

Special guests included representatives from Eagle Spirit Nest Community Association and Elder Charlie Fox from

the Kainai First Nations who gave his blessing for the project, followed by official remarks from Reeve Harris.

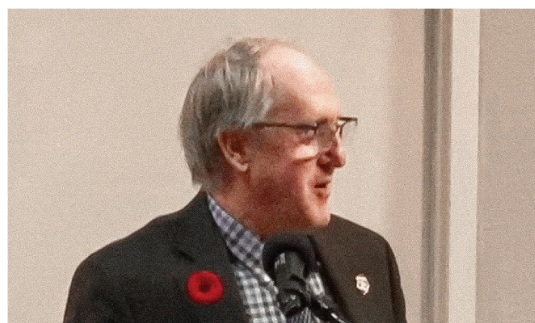
The MD of Taber Council supported this project based on the growing number of abandoned and orphaned oil and gas wells and the amounting problems facing our municipality.

Development of an efficient process for re-purposing legacy oil and gas infrastructure has helped expedite the clean-up of these wells without taking additional lands out of agricultural production – a concern shared equally amongst landowners and Council members – and benefits:

- › **The oil and gas industry** by reducing reclamation costs
- › **The renewable energy sector** by improving land access and network connections
- › **Rural municipalities** through economic development and tax revenue
- › **Landowners** by reclaiming abandoned sites and replacing with solar lease revenue
- › **Irrigation farmers** by providing distributed power generation and reducing need for costly utility system upgrades
- › **Businesses** by creating opportunities to export unique skills and technology to international markets

Additionally, the economic spinoff generated from these projects will benefit the municipality and our ratepayers and stimulate many employment opportunities in the area.

This project is ongoing, and updates on progress will be provided regularly.



NEW REGIONAL ENFORCEMENT SERVICES PARTNERSHIP IS OFFICIAL

The new regional enforcement services partnership is intended to serve the needs of residents, communities, and people within the MD of Taber.

With respect to the recent past, Regional Enforcement Services was an established service with Community Peace Officers that worked closely with the RCMP, playing a key role in and contributing to public safety within the municipality.

It is emphasized that the RCMP will continue to be the Police force of jurisdiction within the MDT.

The new CSO will work to serve our communities in the following key areas:

Bylaw Enforcement: animal control, park patrol, pivot overspray, assist municipal inspectors and officers, scene support for MDT Regional Fire Services and RCMP, and more

Provincial Statutes: public safety and traffic-related concerns such as unsafe and excessive speeding and other traffic violations



With the official announcement of the finalized partnership between the Municipal District of Taber (MDT), the Town of Taber (TOT), and the Taber Police Service (TPS) residents can expect to see the new Community Standards Officer (CSO) in light-blue coloured uniform and newly decaled pickup truck operating within municipal boundaries starting October 17th.

Public Safety Presence: South Central Alberta Rural Crime Watch Association

For all bylaw-related complaints and inquiries call **403-223-4784** (24/7).

Submit after-hour complaints at: **mdtaber.ab.ca/p/service-tracker**

FOR EMERGENCIES, PLEASE DIAL 9-1-1.

Regional Enforcement Services

Promoting compliance with bylaws while ensuring a sense of safety and security.

The Regional Community Standards Officer responds to bylaw complaints and other bylaw-related matters.

These Officers are out in our communities and on public roads. They can serve as a resource for any bylaw question or concern.

FOR ALL BYLAW-RELATED COMPLAINTS AND INQUIRIES PLEASE CALL **403-223-4784** (24/7).

Submit after-hour complaints and inquiries at **MDTABER.AB.CA/P/SERVICE-TRACKER**

FOR EMERGENCIES DIAL 9-1-1.

**BYLAW ENFORCEMENT
PROVINCIAL STATUTES
PUBLIC SAFETY PRESENCE**



4 HIDDEN DANGERS OF SNOW PILES

Ever wondered how dangerous a snow pile can be?

Here are 4 reasons why piling your "Private Snow" on roads is a "No".

1) It's dangerous to others

When snow from private properties encroaches on the roadway, motorists may have difficulty seeing oncoming traffic or pedestrians. The snow also reduces the space available for pedestrians and vehicles to share the road, and that can bring them dangerously close together in possibly slippery conditions.

2) Snow piles interfere with plowing

Piles of snow on municipal roads are also an issue for our maintenance operators because they are obstacles to plowing. A grader and loader may be brought in to remove the snow. Our budgets are not intended for clearing "private snow" off public property.

When plows need to detour around piles of snow or can not remove snow from the road due to large deposits that must first be removed, everyone who travels the area receives a lower level of maintenance. Our operators make an effort not to block private accesses and driveways during road plowing operations.

3) Drainage and damage problems

Piling snow into ditches is also a "snow-no." Why's that? Snow piles can interfere with drainage, causing damage to both public and private property. You could find yourself in a costly conflict with a neighbour or the Province of Alberta.

4) Unauthorized use of right-of-ways

In accordance with Section 3(14) of our Unauthorized Use of Municipal Property Bylaw No 1806, moving snow onto a municipal right-of-way (eg. municipal roads, ditches, bridges) is considered unauthorized use. People who do not comply may have to pay for the removal of the snow if it is deemed a safety hazard or a risk of damaging public infrastructure or damages infrastructure.

Scan or visit to learn more: **mdtaber.ab.ca/p/winter-maintenance**



MDT PARTNERS WITH TABER LOST PAWS SOCIETY

During a regular Council meeting on June 28th, Council carried a motion to partner with the Taber Lost Paws Society to provide animal care and adoption services for impounded dogs, in accordance with our recently passed Responsible Dog Ownership Bylaw No 1992.

The local dog shelter, located at the north end of Taber at 5710 66 Ave, will care for dogs that are abandoned or in distress, seeking to return them to their original owner or to permanently re-home them.

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), members of Council visited the Taber Lost Paws Society on September 22nd, bringing with them a very generous one-time donation of \$50,000 towards the local dog shelter.

By partnering with the Taber Lost Paws Society, the non-profit organization will use their expertise to:

- promote responsible dog ownership
- promote dog identification
- support spay and neuter programs
- offer animal care education to dog owners
- provide care and return/home lost and stray dogs

Residents are expected to be responsible for their pet.

For more information about the program please call 403-223-3541.

To report or find a lost dog, or to speak to our Animal Control Officer please call 403-223-4784.

To contact the Taber Lost Paws Society please call 403-360-6448.



SMALL BUSINESS SUBCLASS



Is all or part of your property eligible to qualify as a SMALL BUSINESS in the MD of Taber?

Until recently, businesses were charged the same property tax rate regardless of their size. The small business subclass can offer, at the discretion of Council, up to a 25 per cent in tax savings compared to other non-residential properties.

Non-residential class has been divided into 3 subclasses, defined in related regulations as follows:

- vacant non-residential property
- small business property
- other non-residential property

This allows Council the opportunity to consider differentiating tax rates for each non-residential subclass during the annual budget process.

In order to be considered as non-residential subclass for the 2023 tax year, submit your small business application on or before February 15th, 2023.

To learn more about non-residential subclasses and Bylaw No 1952, or to download an application, scan or visit: mdtaber.ab.ca/p/small-business-subclass

Go paperless with e-billing

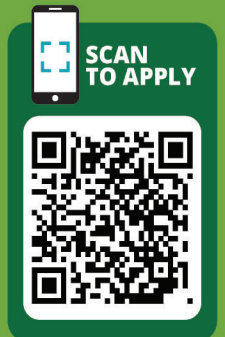
Residents now have the option to go paperless and have utility bills sent directly to an email address.

Why switch to e-Bill?

- e-Bill is quick, easy to use, and secure
- You will receive an email notification with your bill attached
- e-Bill reduces paper clutter and the need to file or recycle old bills
- You can access your bills anywhere, anytime

Scan or visit to sign up for our new e-Billing service online:

mdtaber.ab.ca/p/utility-ebilling



2023 BUDGETS & PLANS

The Municipal District of Taber's **2023 Interim Operating & Capital Budget**, along with the most recent Operating & Capital Plans are available on our website:

mdtaber.ab.ca/p/operating-capital-budgets



PREPAID BULK WATER ACCOUNTS

Starting January 1, 2023:
All bulk water accounts will be prepaid only.

You will be able to add funds to your bulk water account the same way you pay your monthly water invoices.

- No minimum or maximum amount of funds to be added to your account
- Please indicate your account number on payments

Ways to prepay

IN-PERSON

Prepay by cash, debit or cheque at the main office, or leave a cheque in the after-hours drop box located at the front doors.

BY MAIL

Send a cheque addressed to:
Municipal District of Taber
4900B – 50th Street
Taber, AB T1G 1T2

ONLINE

Using your credit card visit
mdtaber.ab.ca/p/payments
and prepay (service fees apply).

AT MOST FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

In-person, or through online and telephone banking. To add as a payee, look for 'Municipal District of Taber', or contact your bank or financial institution.

Scan or visit to learn more:
mdtaber.ab.ca/p/bulk-water



2023 FARMER PESTICIDE COURSE:

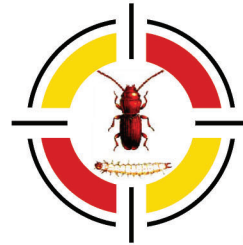
MANDATORY FOR FARMERS WHO WISH TO USE RESTRICTED PESTICIDES SUCH AS THIMET FOR POTATO PRODUCTION OR PHOSTOXIN FOR GRAIN BIN FUMIGATION. USEFUL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLANNING, AND FOR HACCP, CANADA GAP COMPLIANCE.

At the main operations & maintenance facility.



Course dates available:

January 11, 2023
February 8, 2023
March 8, 2023
April 5, 2023



To register, you:

1. Must be 18 years of age or older.
2. Must be fluent in English.
3. Must prepay a \$40.00 registration fee prior to course date. Fee includes course manual.

How to register:

Please send registration form complete with payment payable to:

MD of Taber
4900B – 50th St
Taber, AB T1G 1T2



Forms available online at
mdtaber.ab.ca/p/courses-workshops
or register by phone at **403-223-3541**.

For more information contact **Jason Bullock**, Director of Agricultural Services at **403-634-4429**.

12% PENALTY ON ALL UNPAID TAXES

All property taxes remaining unpaid after January 31, 2023 will be subject to a **12% penalty on February 1, 2023**.

Information on how you can make payments to your property taxes is available at:

mdtaber.ab.ca/p/property-taxes



MAKE YOUR PROPERTY TAX PAYMENT SIMPLE

Sign up today for our monthly Tax Instalment Payment Plan (TIPP)

mdtaber.ab.ca/p/tipp-application